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A SUPER-SPOKESWOMAN FOR

By Judy Nicol
(Des Moines Tribune-Chicago
Sun-Times Service)

CHICAGO, ILL. — Eight women's newspapers sprang up during 1970 to lead, or at least follow, the women's liberation movement.

Probably the best, for those not enamored of revolutionary rhetoric, is the Spokeswoman, a monthly published in Chicago by Urban Research Corp. It is edited, typed, proofread, laid out and produced by Susan Davis, 29.

The Spokeswoman emerged

June 5, 1970, and was met with instant distrust.

One women's publication, Off Our Backs, called on its readers to boycott the paper, claiming it exploited women. Another said it was Central Intelligence Agency-backed.

Widespread distrust occurred partly because the Spokeswoman is crammed with statistics, names, addresses and facts from across the country. It is more than one staff could gather accurately. Many people threw it away as hearsay.

The superwoman behind the Spokeswoman is really a supermachine.

A data bank stores information from major U.S. newspapers and magazines, organizes it by subject matter and spits it out for research every month. In six months of publication the Spokeswoman has recorded the following:

Women students organizing day-care centers on campuses nationwide.

Women's lib groups attempting to organize women into labor unions, particularly in banks and insurance companies.

"Lollipop Power," a research report on children's toys and books and the ways in which they portray and mold women.

Women being fired for women's liberation activities.

Court cases against employers who discriminate against women — most have been decided in women's favor.

The newspaper, according to Miss Davis, tries to concentrate on trends and widespread related events. Among these is the change in major newspapers' coverage of women's liberation events.

In August, Miss Davis says, most news articles made fun of the movement. In September, Women's Lib reporters went into hibernation.

In October, serious stories about subjects such as discrimination, care and abortion started to appear. And in

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November, the serious, non-pejorative coverage was massive.

Women's lib, according to Miss Davis, is being taken seriously.

The other regularly publishing women's newspapers are It Aint's, Mc Babe, Aint's I a Woman (quote from Sojourner Truth), Every Women, Rat (an existing paper taken over by women), Goodbye to All That, Broadside, and the Pedestal.

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